FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

First Class

To:

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 1083
BERKELEY, CAL.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS P. O. BOX 9007 BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

Send RTN for ___ year(s) at $9.75 per year or $5.00 for 6 months. My remittance is enclosed. This is: a new___ renewal/extension___ gift___.

NAME. . . . . .

ADDRESS . . . . . .

#159

Rec'd 9-7-77

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

40¢

VOL. 7 NO. 15
FIRST ISSUE OF
AUGUST 1977
#159

* THE FLORIDIAN STORY
* AMTRAK'S STRANGEST TRAIN

FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

First Class

To:

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 1083
BERKELEY, CAL.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS P. O. BOX 9007 BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

Send RTN for ___ year(s) at $9.75 per year or $5.00 for 6 months. My remittance is enclosed. This is: a new___ renewal/extension___ gift___.

NAME. . . . . .

ADDRESS . . . . . .

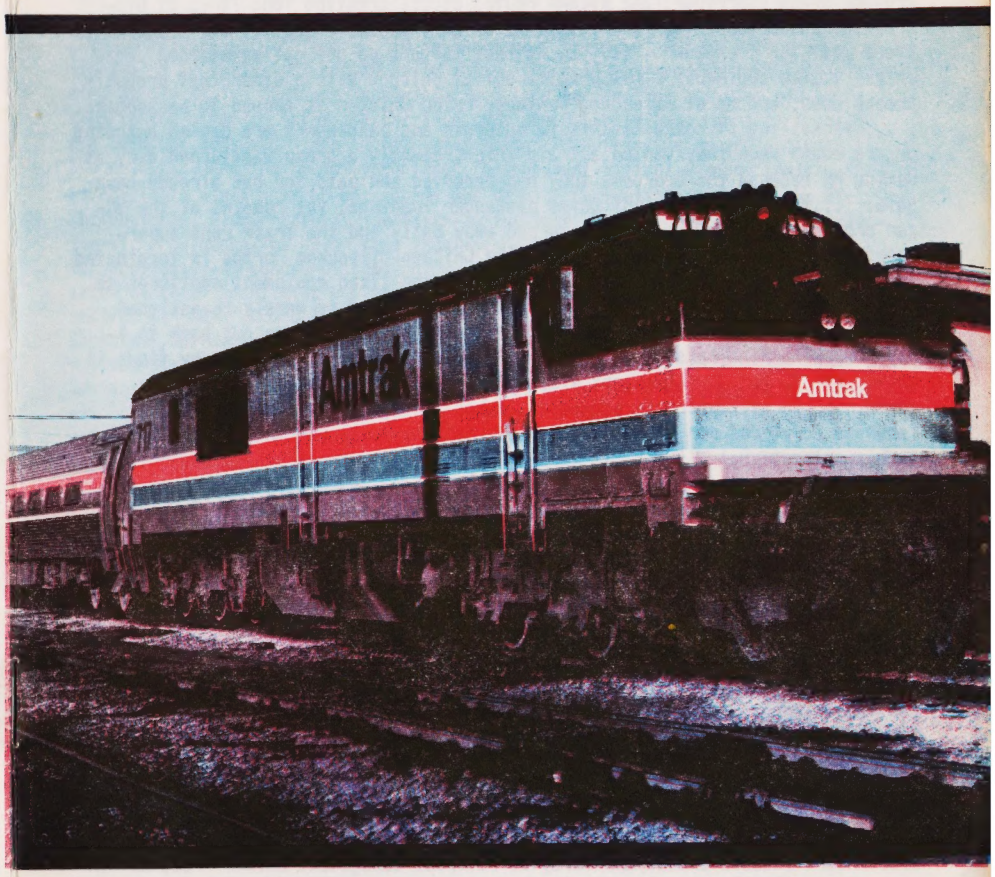
#159

Recd 9-7-77

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

40¢

VOL. 7 NO. 15
FIRST ISSUE OF
AUGUST 1977
#159



* THE FLORIDIAN STORY
* AMTRAK'S STRANGEST TRAIN

ON THE COVER:

The first Amfleet ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, on May 7, 1976, drawn by General Electric P30CH (nicknamed POOCH) diesel engine 717. After this introduction, Amfleet cars didn't stay very long--at first. For the story of the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, "Amtrak's most unusual train," see Larry Anglund's article in this issue. Kodachrome taken by Harry M. Grossman at Galesburg, Illinois.

LETTERS

Just what is going on in Amtrak's corporate mind these days? It appears that the railroad is coming apart at the seams. Of course, Congress has cut Amtrak's budget and certain cutbacks are necessary, but what seems to be happening makes Amtrak look foolish. I refer to such items as:

...Continuing to run Amfleet snackbar coaches with only one attendant in crowded areas (Corridor, SAN DIEGAN route, etc.), creating long lines of disgruntled passengers; the food itself is of only passable quality and frequently there just isn't enough of it. ...Amfleet toilets do not get maintained properly. ...The SOUTHWEST LIMITED rolls out of Chicago with a diner that promptly breaks down, and so at Galesburg Kentucky Fried Chicken is served to passengers. ...Overselling of coach tickets is epidemic and passengers are denied boarding or are bused when they wanted a train trip (recently a group was turned away at Deming NM because the bedrooms they had reserved and paid for had already been sold. ...The COAST STARLIGHT gains passenger loadings, yet remains at the 18-car arbitrary limit. People are turned away daily and the train runs supercrowded as it is. ...Club service on the Chicago-Milwaukee Turbos is terminated for economy reasons (attendant's salary), yet the fixed equipment continues to roll with empty first-class sections and the attendant is merely re-assigned, not laid off. ...Certain middle- and long-distance trains are cut back to 4-day-a-week running because patronage is not "up to par" or the company finds it convenient to get new equipment placed into service that way.

Amtrak, in attempting to economize, makes the same shopworn mistake that large corporations are prone to do--i.e., let the lowly worker go first to save on his salary. But without his face to the public, without his answering of the reservations phone or his ticket clerking or his on-board servicing of passengers, SERVICE is lowered and more patrons decide that Amtrak really is a crock. Imagine trying to save money by removing a waiter from a diner! Yet that type of thing is common. If the corporation is too fat, don't cut off vital organs just to lose weight.

Let's also remember that new 403B trains are approved and money is spent to get them going, yet 90% of the equipment that was bad-ordered last winter is still out of service.

New men in new positions may come up with some new ideas, but I see too much foolish thinking and planning at Amtrak that negates the good. Inveterate train riders have put up with Amtrak's bobbing and weaving in the last several years, but I for one am losing the faith.

Just how, let me ask, is On-Board Services (to name just one department) with its great new ideas on improving employee morale going to implement its changes when trains run understaffed and overbooked with ill-maintained equipment over substandard roadbed and at the mercy of railroad management whims? Yet, Amtrak seems to pay little attention to these and other over-the-road problems.

Rail Travel News, Vol. 7, No. 15 (Whole No. 159). First Issue of August, 1977.
Copyright © 1977 by Message Media.
Published twice monthly by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $9.75 per year; single copy 40¢. Overseas and institutional rates on request. STAFF: Editor: James Russell. Editor-at-Large: Paul Rayton. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Los Angeles; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston.

This is certainly so in regards to the FLORIDIAN. For years Amtrak has kept that train on a low profile. Older equipment was invariably assigned, Penn Central's terror track was followed, schedules were slow and tedious, etc. Now the call is to terminate the train because "nobody wants to ride it." Come on, guys--that sounds like Southern Pacific in the '60s. Haven't any lessons been learned with success stories like the LAKE SHORE LIMITED?

Given the tools Amtrak has, and the little that it's really accomplished over the years--well, I'm really quite sad.

Peter Putnam Bretz
Los Angeles, California

AMTRAK PLANS MORE CUTS, FARE INCREASE

Following its Board meeting of Aug 31, Amtrak announced more service cuts, along with fare increases, in order to reduce its deficit in the next fiscal year. These cuts are in addition to those detailed here last issue, and are to take effect Oct 30. They include reduction to 4 times weekly service on the SHENANDOAH and HILLTOPPER, and dropping of one daily and one Sunday-only roundtrip on the Chicago-Milwaukee Turboliners. In the Northeast Corridor, Amtrak will drop an average of 22 trains out of 120 daily runs. The rail corporation said it was cutting mainly trains that are scheduled close to other trains, and will add extra cars to the others. Among the Corridor cuts are 10 Metroliner runs; of these, 4 are Saturday cuts and 4 are Sunday cuts. Some 200-series trains are included in the cutbacks, and the recently-replaced "Clamdigger" will be dropped (Amtrak said it carried a maximum of 50 passengers per trip). Cuts will be seen on the NY-Philadelphia, NY-Harrisburg, New Haven-Springfield, Harrisburg-Philadelphia, Boston-NY, Providence-New Haven, and Washington-NY runs. On the Florida service, the previously-announced discontinuance of the CHAMPION from Sep 8-Dec 13 will be extended to an indefinite period. Amtrak said it will add a Florida West Coast section to the SILVER METEOR Oct 30, and will run special sections during the Christmas holidays. On Aug 22 Amtrak announced that it will cut the PALMETTO to 4 times weekly operation starting Sep 11; NY departures will be Thur-Sun, and Savannah departures will be Fri-Mon inclusive, while the NY-Washington leg continues to run daily. It will run daily again Nov 18 thru Jan 8, then quad-weekly once more Jan 9-Jun 15, 1978. The PALMETTO reduction will save Amtrak $200,000 per year, the corporation said. Amtrak must obtain permission from the DOT to reduce the SHENANDOAH service, since it is a designated "experimental" route.

A fare increase formula was approved by Amtrak's Board Aug 31, which will up fares by an average of about 2½ per cent, some routes getting increases as high as 5 per cent, while some will get none. The fares will take effect Oct 30, and will be announced in detail about Sep 30. Amtrak last raised fares on Jun 1, and said the increase follows a "previously established policy of reexamining fares each spring and fall...to keep pace with inflation."

SAN JOAQUIN CUT IS CANCELLED

The SAN JOAQUIN will continue to run daily, thanks to the action of the California Dept. of Transportation. On Sep 2 CalTrans and Amtrak reached an agreement whereby the state will for one year reimburse Amtrak for the difference in the deficit between daily and quad-weekly operation. Recent ridership increases on the Oakland-Bakersfield train were cited in conjunction with the action. Amtrak had earlier announced a cutback in the train's frequency as part of its system-wide service reductions in order to meet a lower-than-anticipated budget.

TRAIN IS RENAMED

The JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY will be renamed the CARDINAL, starting Oct 30, Amtrak announced Aug 25. The Cardinal is the state bird of all six states served by the train--Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia and Virginia. Other names considered: TRAILBLAZER, GEO. WASHINGTON, DANIEL BOONE, VIRGINIAN, QUEEN CITY LTD, and ALLEGHANY LTD. The NYC introduced the RILEY in 1941.

Rail Canada

AIR STRIKE AFFECTS CANADIAN TRAVEL by Robert W. Rynerson

Canada's air transport system was near paralysis beginning Sunday, August 7, as air traffic controllers struck for higher wages. Transport Minister Otto Lang requested a special one-day session of Parliament to pass legislation ordering the controllers back to work at the wages he last offered before the strike.

Shifts to rail and bus transport depended upon the trip lengths and the services available. The ability of rail and bus lines to handle the load was severely restricted by the strike's timing during the summer peak travel period. Following is a roundup of reports from across Canada:

TORONTO--Crowds were lined deep at Toronto's Union Station, center of the fairly comprehensive "Corridor" service. Passengers on Sunday were reported lucky to be able to obtain space on Monday.

WINNIPEG--CN reported that it was able to shoehorn an extra 75 passengers aboard the eastbound SUPER CONTINENTAL on Sunday by addition of an extra coach and the use of every randomly available space.

CALGARY--CP had an 80-person wait list for the eastbound CANADIAN Monday. Some space was available for single reservations from Thursday on.

EDMONTON--Beginning the Saturday before the strike, CN was receiving 100-150 calls an hour on its reservation phone line. Sunday morning's Train 1 was on time, with the regular summer consist (18 cars, including 7 sleepers) and coach 5548 and sleeper "Elbow River" remained on steam on the standby track. Monday morning the cars were on their way west in an expanded (and late-running) SUPER CONTINENTAL, leaving Edmonton stripped of standby cars. On the south side of Edmonton, CP's Railiner for Calgary left with a nearly full load. The single agent, who also handles dispatching duties, was glued to an ever-ringing phone. The intentionally obscure CP corridor service was not overloaded, however, despite the absence of the hourly 737 Edmonton-Calgary "airbus" service offered by Pacific Western. Greyhound's hourly nonstop express service was running in 2 or 3 sections, as traffic switched to this well-publicized service. Traffic was also held down on CP by the impossibility of obtaining reserved space east or west from Calgary. Most turned-away passengers at South Edmonton said they would sit out the strike in Edmonton rather than take a bus to Calgary. For some there was no service; the discontinuance of trains to various Canadian and U.S. points, or the awkward connections in other cases, seemed to surprise ticket counter visitors.

* * *

"THE DISCOVERY TRAIN" will be the title of the national tour train to begin runs thru Canada, using the former American Freedom Train equipment. The 15 ex-PC baggage cars used on the AFT have been sold to Canada for $575,000, and have become part of the National Museums of Canada (see also story last issue).

THE SECOND NATIONAL Rail Passenger Conference and Public Transport Users' Congress will be held Sep 30-Oct 2 at Four Seasons Hotel and Algonquin College, Ottawa, sponsored by Transport 2000 and affiliates. Themes are: Equal accessibility to public transport; Consumer participation in transport planning; and Integration of rail, road, air, and urban transit. Fee $30 ($35 after 9/15) to: Algonquin College Conference Secretariat, Rm B293, 1385 Woodroffe Ave, Ottawa K2G 1V8 Canada. Fall excursion to Waltham is available Oct 2.

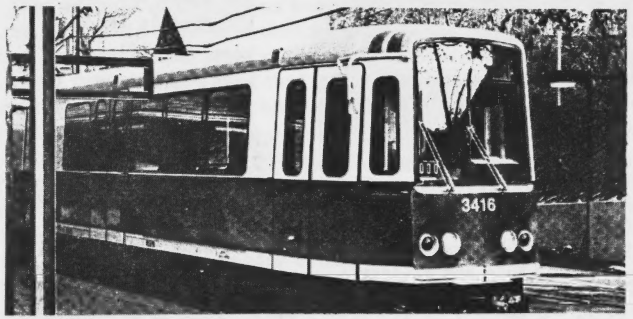
THE CONSOLIDATION OF CN and CP services is some time off, judging by planned consists of the SUPER CONTINENTAL for Oct 30-Apr 29. Sleepers are reduced to one car out of Toronto. Such mid-winter reduction was severely criticized at last year's Toronto hearings. Critics say that even in that "slack" period one car was totally inadquate and people were daily turned away. This summer the train was cut back from 5 to 3 sleepers each out of Montreal and Toronto. CN has admitted that business was up considerably from last summer, and while long wait lists were taken day after day, requests for more cars met with the reply

that the train was "up to limit." The limits are set arbitrarily by the railway, critics say. During the airline shutdown recently CN was able to run 8 sleepers on the CAVALIER instead of the usual 3. The upcoming SUPER CONTINENTAL consist is: baggage (Mont-Win), bag (Tor-Van), coach (T-V), coach (Mont-Capreol), Coach (M-V), cafe lounge (M-V), Dayniter (M-V), Dayniter (T-V), club lounge (T-Win), diner (T-W), Sceneramic dome (W-V), diner (W-V), 4-8-4 slpr (W-V), 4-8-4 slpr (T-V), 4-8-4 slpr (M-V), slpr, lounge & crew (M-Cap) 24-rm slpr, crew (T-V).

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU took a rail vacation on CN's SUPER CONTINENTAL with his 3 children, a governess, and 2 attendants from Aug 9 to Aug 17, with stopovers, using two of four private cars owned by the transport department. The party boarded at Ottawa on the 9th andarrived at Jasper on the 14th, leaving there the 16th for a trip to Prince Rupert, where the Prime Minister flew to Whitehorse for a meeting. The 8-day trip covered 2600 miles.

Urban-Suburban Transit

A SUBWAY DAM collapsed in a construction area of Washington Metro's unfinished yellow line the night of Aug 25, causing water from the Potomac River to enter the tunnel and onto the blue line, causing the latter to be partially closed for several days. The redline continues to operate. On Aug 1 Metro re-routed some bus lines to connect with rail stations instead of running into downtown, and more such changes will be made Sep 6. Some complaints were heard that some trips were made longer and costlier by the changes. A Metro extension to Silver Spring MD scheduled to open Nov 30 has been put off until Feb 6 because of the need to replace communications cable on the 5-mile extension. A Washington Post article on Jul 31 by a British urban transit student suggested "derailing" Metro and turning the subway into an underground busway. An Aug 5 editorial in the same newspaper said the idea "borders on fantasy", but suggested attention to two questions: that of reliability and efficiency of Metro's equipment, operations & planning; and whether all the outlying arms of the system ought to be completed.



Light Rail Vehicle on Boston's green line. MBTA photo.

THE READER'S DIGEST, Aug issue, carries an article entitled "Anatomy of a Boondoggle," about the people-mover built at West Virginia University in Morgantown. All its problems are noted, and the conclusion is that it "ought to make government think twice before funding people-movers elsewhere.

A BART STRIKE began Aug 25 and continues at this writing (Sep 3). One-third of BART's police force defied a court order and struck, with other workers honoring picket lines. Administrative personnel operated the system with reduced service, 6am-7pm, and ridership is up to about 2/3 of normal. Meanwhile, an AC Transit strike is threatned, as talks with the Amalgamated Transit Union stalled.

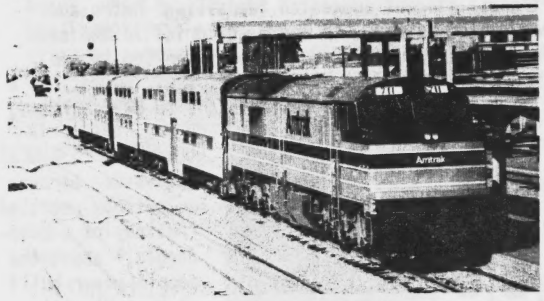
TRANSIT BRIEFS: SEPTA's ex-North Shore Electroliners are up for sale... Boston's MBTA will no longer run trains north of Boston late at night when rock concerts are scheduled at Boston Garden in the "interest of public safety"... Italian firm of Breda Costruzioni Ferroviarie is apparent low bidder to build new cars for Cleveland's Shaker Rapid fleet.....

AMTRAK'S MOST UNUSUAL TRAIN
A History of the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR
by Larry Anglund

If any Amtrak train stands out as particularly different, it must be the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR. Starting as Burlington Northern trains 5&6 between Chicago and West Quincy, Missouri, this remnant of the KANSAS CITY ZEPHYR ran primarily as a service to students attending Western Illinois University at Macomb and Quincy College. When Amtrak took over on May 1, 1971 the corporation announced that it would drop the train, at which time Quincy College obtained a restraining order forcing BN to operate a one-car local at its own expense until May 10, 1971 when the restraining order was lifted.

The colleges continued to protest, and after six months of negotiations between Amtrak and the State of Illinois, the train was reinstated on November 4, 1971. In the agreement the State of Illinois was to pay two-thirds of the operating deficit. The train was given the name ILLINOIS ZEPHYR--train 347 which runs westbound daily, and 348 which runs eastbound daily except Sunday, when 346 runs on a two-hour later schedule.

Until mid-1973 equipment was an ex-Burlington E unit or a BN E unit and conventional cars including domes. June 11, 1973 brought a change--Amtrak assigned leased C&NW F-7 units (which had auxiliary generators) with bi-level commuter cars. The cars were painted C&NW green and yellow, but as time went on they began to appear in Amtrak colors. The C&NW F units were all but reliable, so Amtrak E units came in for occasional assistance. In August, 1974 Amtrak eliminated the F units and substituted reshopped E units with auxiliary generators. These were used until December, 1975, when Amtrak received the GE P30CH's that were on order, and placed them on the train.



BACK TO BILEVELS: In June, 1976 the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR was again seen with P30 diesels (#711 here) and bilevel cars. Photo by Harry Grossman, at Galesburg, Illinois.

Amtrak encountered problems with the P30's and bi-level cars in late January, 1976, so the IZ was downgraded to E units and conventional equipment for a three-week period until the trouble was resolved. From February, 1976 to May 6, 1976, equipment was again P30's and bi-levels.

On May 6, 1976 Amfleet cars arrived but ran only one week on the train because other trains were short of equipment. And so it was back to bi-levels and P30's. Finally on December 7, 1976 Amfleet came to stay. Since that time the train could be found with almost any kind of power--E units, P30's and even F40's. In the very cold period in January, 1977 it wasn't uncommon to see a BN freight engine pulling the train.

The train's schedule has hardly ever changed since 1971--departing Chicago at 6pm and arriving Chicago at 10:30am. These times have varied no more than 20 minutes either way. Ridership has slowly increased and is expected to continue rising.

By two colleges fighting for their wants, a daily train between Chicago and Quincy now exists, making intermediate stops at LaGrange, Aurora, Plano, Mendota, Kewanee, Galesburg, Macomb and Quincy, Illinois, and appropriately named the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR.

THE PRESENT CRISIS AT AMTRAK
by James Russell

Amtrak has come under more attack by its supporters this summer than at any time since the reign of Roger Lewis. As cut after service cut becomes known, rail travel supporters are becoming more irate. Having expected better things with the succession of Brock Adams to DOT leadership, they are now finding the first real period of rail service cutbacks since Amtrak began. Even under the hostile oversight of Brinegar and Coleman, Amtrak made slow but steady expansion and improvement. Now, ironically, with a friendly person in the Cabinet Amtrak is faced with one of the biggest crises of its existence.

The biggest factor in the crisis was the work of Bert Lance's Office of Management and Budget in the White House. Last spring Lance's OMB cut Amtrak's request for appropriations for next fiscal year by $34.1 million--down to an even $500 million. That $34.1 million would have provided a lot of needed service to the public. Lance is currently under strong attack in Washington for other reasons, and may be forced to give up his post, but that won't help Amtrak's problem. Why Amtrak was silent about this cut last spring is not known. The corporation agreed to take that figure--$500 million--to Congress, but warned that it would have to pare service to stay within that budget.

The next chapter in Amtrak's budget story came when the House in a joint meeting with Senate members voted to cut Amtrak's request even further--to $488.5 million. This move was the work of Democratic Congressman John McFall of Manteca, California, in the San Joaquin Valley. McFall is chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. He was reportedly unswayed by threats that Amtrak's SAN JOAQUIN would be cut back. Now sources say that he is feeling much pressure from his constituents and from the media in the San Joaquin Valley about his actions.

The actions of Congress seem to reflect a growing loss of support for Amtrak. This loss was undoubtedly conditioned by Amtrak's poor performance last winter when it ran into severe equipment problems and annulled a lot of trains. Granted that it was the most difficult winter on record, and granted that it was very hard to cope with several feet of ice over vital tracks and other problems. Nevertheless Amtrak made mistakes last winter that it would rather not admit. Recently a shakeup and reorganization at high levels within Amtrak has been occurring. A number of observers believe that Amtrak President Paul Reistrup has been too slow in making top personnel changes. They feel that he should have rolled more heads when he took office exactly 2 1/2 years ago. Hopefully new people will improve matters, but they can't change what has already happened.

All forms of transportation suffered in the winter of 1976-77, but our rail passenger system, apparently alone among transportation modes, has not asked the government for extra funds to offset the winter-induced damage. The Highway Administration asked for more money to cover snow-removal and highway-damage expenses. The Federal Aviation Administration asked for more money to cover its extra airport expenses. Amtrak has never asked for extra funds to defray the damage it incurred last winter. The vast majority of Amtrak cars frozen up and damaged last winter remain unrepaired. Amtrak should request a supplemental appropriation from Congress because of its winter losses.

Some insiders feel that the key to Amtrak's problems lies with its Board of Directors. At present there are seven vacancies to be filled, and the Carter administration is apparently asking for only one re-appointment--

that of retired labor leader Charles Luna. Names of three other proposed members have been revealed in the press late this month, and they include two very strong and prominent passenger train supporters--Anthony Haswell, founder of NARP, and California State Senator James R. Mills. The third person is M. Athalie Range, a Miami funeral home director and activist in black civic affairs. These names might be sent to the Senate in September for confirmation, when Congress returns from vacation.

If the White House in proposing these new Board members plans to strengthen Amtrak, that's very well and good. However, Amtrak's current crisis also stems from a White House action, the OMB's obsession with budget balancing. The administration makes a lot of favorable noises about improving transportation and saving energy, but it doesn't have a good record for putting its money where its mouth is. The Wall Street Journal keeps saying that Carter is displeased with Secretary Adams, primarily because of a dispute over whether to support airline deregulation. The press charges that Adams is too pre-occupied with preparing to run for the Senate to do an effective job. Newspapers in Adams's home state of Washington, at first elated over his appointment to the Cabinet, have become bitter about his alleged distancing himself from state problems and making himself inaccessible to reporters.

Washington seems to be in disarray over transportation matters, and all the while the cast of characters there is goofing off and making wrong-headed decisions, the evidence keeps coming in that our public transportation system must be strengthened with all possible speed.

A new market research study prepared in all seriousness (see last issue) forecasts an increase in rail travel of three thousand per cent between 1975 and 1995, or an average increase of 150% yearly. This is for intercity travel only; rail commuter travel will also increase markedly. (We have not seen the original $650/copy study, but can refer the reader to a summary in Railway Age, Jul 25 issue.)

A massive survey of 72.5 million households performed by the Census Bureau and HUD, released August 28, found that inadequate transportation was the biggest problem people complained of around their places of residence--much more so than urban crime, altho crime occupies a greater portion of news media space and time than does transportation. Not only that, but traffic noise was the most frequently listed undesirable condition existing near their homes.

Add to the existence of these compelling data the fact that the administration went to the trouble to establish a Department of Energy to cope with the enormous problems of powering the nation's machines as conventional fuel runs out, and one can only conclude that the government's left hand does not know what its right hand is doing. It is cutting back on the most fuel-efficient mode of transportation at the same time that it's trying to conserve energy.

Tom Wicker in the New York Times (Sept 2) raises the same question: "The reduced federal subsidy (to Amtrak), forcing service cuts and fare increases, is nothing less than weird. How do Mr. Carter and Congress expect ever to convince the public that there's an energy crisis--much less that they know how to cope with it?"

And the budget cutting that forces Amtrak to reduce service and act like the pre-1971 railroads is giving the rail corporation a bad image just at the time when people should be encouraged to switch to the rail mode whenever possible.

As Congress returns from its vacation in September there will be a lot of letters heading their way from a public that must take the brunt of every wrong-headed Washington decision.

THE FLORIDIAN STORY

by Dr. Charles A. Dunn

The proposed discontinuance of the Chicago-Florida FLORIDIAN has aroused a vast amount of opposition among rail supporters, and Amtrak has asked for their comments on this plan and on several re-routing alternatives which were listed in our last issue.

The FLORIDIAN's route is one of its serious deficiencies. Amtrak's incorporators apparently followed the path of least resistance in choosing the present route via Montgomery and Birmingham, the route one of the pre-Amtrak trains followed. According to Amtrak's first annual report, the Southern Railway opposed service thru Atlanta. The report said that Amtrak was evaluating the possibility of running the train thru Atlanta, but now--six years later--discontinuance is threatened.

When the present route was selected, letters and telegrams of protest to Amtrak were answered by form letters. In 1974 Mr. Tom Jackson and I put together a detailed route proposal to split the train at Nashville and run one section on the present route and the other on the Chattanooga-Atlanta-Macon-Savannah route, to be rejoined at Jacksonville. Research showed this to be operationally feasible. In spite of overwhelming support of the proposal from all sectors along the route, Amtrak gave it only lip service. The ICC in Ex Parte No. 277 (Sub-No 3) stated: "Witnesses in the Florida hearing sessions told of thick files of letters and civic resolutions with which they have bombarded Amtrak and DOT officials in Washington. But they came away with inconclusive results, an unsatisfying feeling that they are not quite sure what the standards are, nor sure they have gotten their message across to the real decision makers in Washington. There is a feeling that the needs of the Southeast have not been given adequate consideration..."

That Atlanta is the business, educational, population and convention hub of the Southeast is common knowledge. It has the second busiest airport in the nation. Yet Atlanta remains inaccessible from Florida or the Midwest on Amtrak. The added population that would be served on the Nashville-Jacksonville segment thru Atlanta is over a million--2,089,000 vs. 940,599 on the present route. The figure Amtrak gives, 8.5% increase, is diluted by the population along the entire Chicago-Florida route. Routing the train thru Atlanta would increase the financial contribution tremendously, in spite of the capital investment required.

On April 25, 1976 Amtrak decided to route the FLORIDIAN only on the Orlando-Auburndale leg, dropping the Waldo (Gainesville)-Ocala leg despite the train's carrying 11,925 coach and 596 sleeper passengers on this leg in 1975. After public outcry, the service was restored May 15, 1976. But the ill-founded initial decision illustrates Amtrak's thinking about the FLORIDIAN. Elementary logic says that you don't decrease a deficit by cutting out ridership--you INCREASE the deficit.

The FLORIDIAN's schedule has been juggled more than any other Amtrak train. The schedule has been changed 18 times, including 4 "flips" between day-night-day and night-day-night (see next 2 pages). The current schedule misses all connections with over 50 Amtrak trains in and out of Chicago. One cannot expect to build up return ridership if the schedule is constantly in flux. Connecting revenue would be greatly increased (it is non-existent now) if the train were put back on the night-day-night schedule, arriving Chicago in early morning and leaving late at night. This would also require only "one day out" for business trips.

Connecting revenue could be increased by scheduling to make connections in Birmingham to allow Chicago-Atlanta, Florida-Atlanta, and Florida-New Orleans service. When this was possible on previous day-night-day schedules, connections were missed by mere minutes, necessitating a 23-hour-plus layover in Birmingham for Chicago-Atlanta travelers, even tho the thru fare was shown in public schedules.

The present Miami arrival time is 10:50pm (if the train is on time). The Miami

CHRONOLOGY OF "FLORIDIAN" SCHEDULES 1971-1977

	Read down (SB)	Read up (NB)	
5-1-71	lv Chicago 8:10am	ar Chicago 7:20pm	Day-Night-Day
	ar Miami 7:00pm	lv Miami 9:45am	
7-12-71	8:30am	7:50pm	
	7:55pm	9:45am	
11-14-71	11:30pm	7:00am	Flipped to Night-Day-Night
	11:40am	7:30pm	
12-17-71	11:30pm	7:00am	
	11:55am	7:10pm	
1-16-72	no change		
1-23-72*	9:00pm	9:35am	Schedule changed--not published--
	11:35am	7:30pm	local handout only
4-30-72	9:00pm	6:00am	Layover Jacksonville 1hr SB,
	1:05pm	12:15pm	1hr 55min NB
6-11-72	no change		
9-12-72	8:30am	8:55pm	Flipped to Day-Night-Day
	10:55pm	8:00am	
2-15-73	8:30am	7:30pm	
	9:55pm	8:00am	
4-29-73	8:30pm	7:00am	Flipped to Night-Day-Night; Layover
	12:55pm	5:10pm	Jacksonville 3'30" SB, 2'30" NB
6-10-73	no change		
10-29-73	8:30pm	7:00am	Layover Jacksonville 4'5" SB,
	1:40pm	3:40pm	3'40" NB
12-14-73	8:55am	7:40pm	Published Flip--Never took place
	9:30pm	8:00am	
12-14-73	8:30pm	7:00am	Actual Schedule
	11:10am	5:30pm	

*Changed from Central Station to Union Station, Chicago.

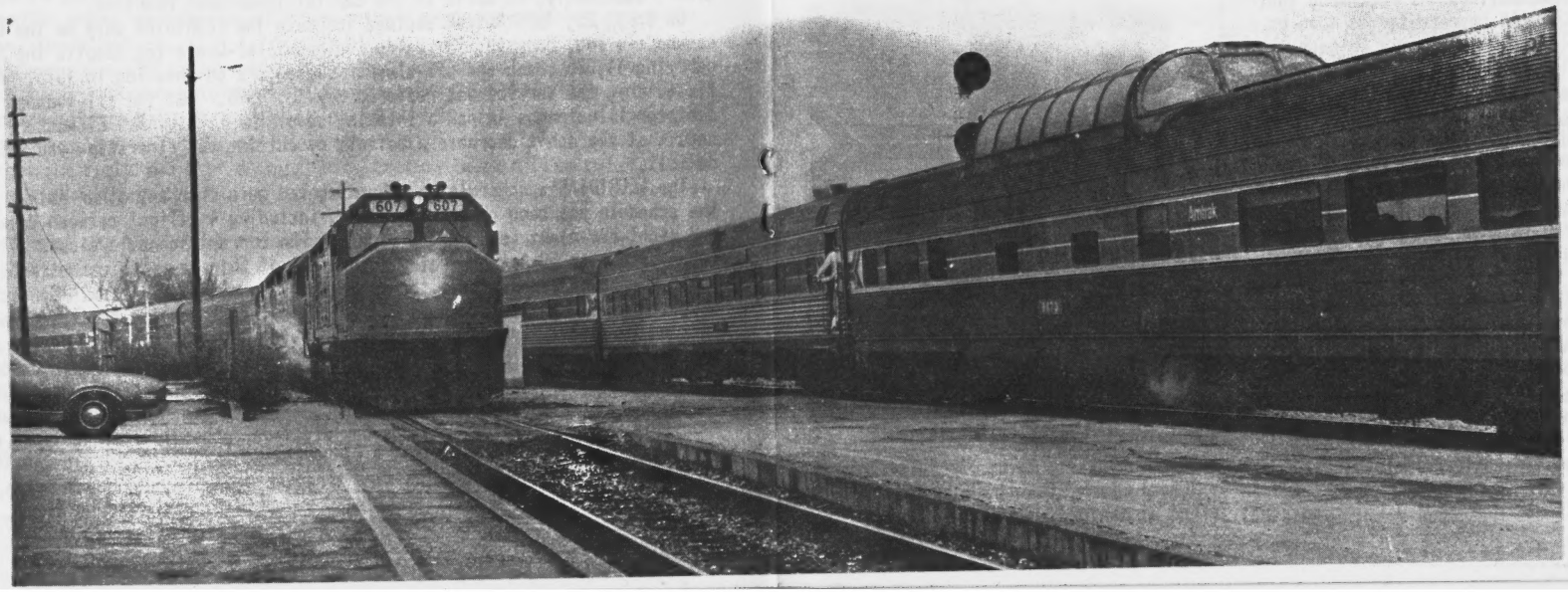
1-6-74	no change	
5-19-74	no change	
9-15-74	8:30pm	7:00am
	10:55am	5:15pm
11-15-74	no change	
1-11-75	no change	
4-27-75	no change	
5-15-75	no change	
9-14-75	9:00pm	7:00am
	11:59am	5:35pm
10-26-75	no change	
11-30-75	no change	
12-12-75	no change	
2-15-76	no change	
4-25-76	9:00pm	7:00am
	1:20pm	4:45pm
6-15-76	9:00pm	7:00am
	12:10pm	5:55pm
7-19-76	no change	
10-31-76	8:30am	9:25pm
	11:35pm	8:50am
4-24-77	8:30am	9:25pm
	10:50pm	8:50am
6-12-77	no change	

Flipped to Day-Night-Day; AUTO-TRAIN added Sanford-Louisville

Summary of changes under Amtrak: 18 schedule changes, four flipped schedules, one aborted flip.

PHOTO BELOW:

Two FLORIDIANS meet at Decatur, Alabama. The northbound train on the left meets the southbound consist at 2:10 pm on December 27, 1975. Both trains were carrying large holiday crowds. While the northbound was on time, the other was running an hour late, a frequent occurrence at that time. Dome coach seen is #9473, a former Burlington car. Photo by Robert van Wormer.



area is a tourist-oriented community, and many patrons use hotels. All hotels that I know require a 6pm check-in (or a paid guaranteed reservation), and this arrival time is not conducive to the tourist business. Previously the Miami arrival time was even worse--11:35pm.

After the cold weather problems last winter, the FLORIDIAN was temporarily discontinued. When service was resumed it was for 3 weeks coach only Miami-Jacksonville. It left one hour, 20 mins ahead of the SILVER METEOR and followed the same route in Florida. The METEOR went out with a diner, the FLORIDIAN with none. As a result, FLORIDIAN ridership was nil. How much did this ill-conceived idea affect the FLORIDIAN deficit?

The FLORIDIAN is the lowest-rated of all Amtrak trains in RTN's latest reader survey (see last issue). Most of this low rating is a result of poor routing and scheduling (both rated below average, in the "unacceptable" range). However, RTN readers will be well aware from previous articles, if not from personal experience, that equipment problems have plagued the train--the FLORIDIAN seeming to receive the equipment castoffs of better Amtrak trains--,that track has been rough and derailments too frequent.

In 1976 Amtrak petitioned the ICC to drop the Jacksonville-Miami sleeping car. This would have required first class passengers to be awakened in the middle of the night at Jacksonville, rousted out of their beds and moved to coach. After public outcry, Amtrak dropped the petition. However, when the schedule was flipped to accommodate the AUTO-TRAIN consolidation, the sleeper WAS dropped, and remains off the train to the present day. In addition, the dining car was dropped between Miami and Jacksonville. Amtrak is circumventing the intent of the ICC Adequacy of Service criteria by not providing full meal and first class service Miami-Jacksonville.

In summary, the FLORIDIAN is building up a large deficit because the train is made extremely unattractive to the rail traveling public because of service and equipment deficiencies, unattractive scheduling with non-existent connections, and routing that misses the logical city to serve--Atlanta.

Amtrak's route criteria clearly mandate that in the method for establishing priority ranking of routes and services, if the service quality can be upgraded and promoted to improve economics, then the recommended ranking is Category 3: CONTINUE WITH REVISED SERVICE. This is clearly the case with the FLORIDIAN. The train has been downgraded and mismanaged to the extent that it is an economic failure. Correction of these deficiencies will meet the economic, social, and environmental criteria necessary for a viable existence.

RECOMMENDATIONS: I recommend that the FLORIDIAN be rerouted as soon as possible thru Atlanta via Chicago, Nashville, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Macon, Savannah, Jacksonville, Miami/St. Petersburg, with a schedule change to night-day-night operation so as to arrive in Chicago to make connections with the Amtrak Midwest network and vice-versa.

In the interim, until this can be reasonably accomplished, the train should be changed to a night-day-night schedule to re-establish Chicago connections; and further that connections be arranged at Birmingham to allow Chicago-Atlanta, Florida-Atlanta, and Florida-New Orleans services (a connection missed by minutes on previous schedules; and further that Miami-Jacksonville-(Chicago) sleeping and dining cars be restored.

The combined FLORIDIAN/AUTO-TRAIN experiment began Oct 31, 1976. In this photo by Robert Clark, the first cars are joined at Sanford, Florida.

ALONG THE MISSING 12 MILES

by Jerome A. Rosenfeld

Amtrak evidently will be replacing in the near future the missing 12 miles of track on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED route--known to some as the Roger Lewis Memorial Roadbed, named for the former Amtrak President who approved the Penn Central's tearing up of the former Boston & Albany passenger line in 1971. As reported earlier in RTN, Congressman Silvio O. Conte of Pittsfield MA had funds specified for this project written into the recent Amtrak appropriations bill, and wants concrete ties used for the job.

The abandoned line runs from Rensselaer NY eastward to Post Road Crossing in Niverville NY, where it met the busy B&A freight line that has freights every few minutes daily in and out of Boston-Selkirk, and one passenger train, the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, that must make a 7-mile backup move between Troy and Rensselaer that would be eliminated by restoration of the 12-mile line.

On a July day I walked 2 miles up the line from Rensselaer, photographing and observing. The signals I saw were intact, but with their mechanisms cannibalized. Also remaining is the ballast, but not a single tie plate, tie, spike or piece of rail anywhere that I walked. All the bridges I saw were intact. About a mile away from the point where the line diverges from the Hudson Line were two target signals. The photo shows the westbound signal, looking eastward.

I learned that if I had proceeded a mile farther I would have come to the location of East Greenbush station. I cannot say whether the building is still standing. Reference to a 1957 employee timetable showed the following names on the line: Interlocking 99 (Rensselaer); Columbia Street (Rensselaer); East Greenbush; Brookview; Van Hoesen; and then Post Road Crossing. The only station on the abandoned portion was East Greenbush, as all the other names were simply the towns the line passed thru. These towns must have had stations years ago, but when my father worked it at times in the 1950's the train only stopped at East Greenbush. In the 1940's and 1950's it was a busy line with many trains. A 1952 Official Guide shows NYC train 6, the Chicago-New York FIFTH AVENUE SPECIAL stopping daily at Brookview and Van Hoesen, and daily "Beeliner" service at these points as well as East Greenbush and Post Road. A 1937 schedule lists only Brookview as a stop between Rensselaer and Niverville.

Presumably the countryside thru which I trudged will be gazed at by numerous Amtrak passengers in the near future.

Watch these pages for announcement of the appearance soon of the long-delayed first RTN Rail Travel Yearbook. Thank you!

Mixed Train of Thoughts

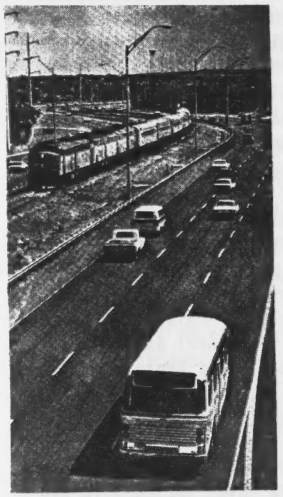
NORTH COAST HIAWATHA may be re-routed thru Helena MT, bypassing Butte and Deer Lodge, but adding Logan and Garrison, in addition to Helena. The main reason for this proposal is that the BN wants to abandon its branch line used by Amtrak thru Butte, and this would increase maintenance of way costs substantially if Amtrak continued to use it. Other reasons for the change, according to Amtrak, are that no feasible alternative line thru Butte exists, that the Helena line is in good condition, that the populations of Butte and Helena are about the same--26,000, that Helena is the state capital, that Butte has an east-west interstate highway and Helena has none, and that added revenue, $91,617 annually, would come from the change (on a tri-weekly basis). Amtrak wants public comment on the idea, and will announce dates and procedures for giving it soon. Amtrak's Board approved the proposal for a public forum at its Aug 31 meeting.....

* * *

CHICAGO TO SEATTLE train schedules for Sep 8 have been leaked to RTN (and thus they could be changed before then), and they show the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA becoming a Minneapolis-Seattle train. That part of the train that ran Chicago-Minneapolis will continue to run on its slow schedule and be renamed the TWIN CITIES HIAWATHA. Four days a week a train will leave Minneapolis as train 7, the EMPIRE BUILDER, and run to Seattle on the northern route. The other 3 days (Sun, Tues, Thur) it leaves Minneapolis (same time as #7, 12:45am) as the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, train 17 (instead of the present #9). No.7 arrives Seattle 3:35pm, while No.17 reaches there at 4:05pm. The NCH of course runs on the Southern route. The eastbound BUILDER #8 leaves Seattle Sun, Tue, Thur, & Sat at 11:55am, while the rest of the week it leaves at 10:45am as train 18, the NCH, and there is a 5½-hour layover in Minneapolis before train 10, the TWIN CITIES HIAWATHA proceeds to Chicago. Minneapolis arrival is 6:05am for the NCH and 6:25am for the BUILDER.....

BOARD OF DIRECTORS of Amtrak on Aug 31 approved spending funds to rehabilitate station and tracks to allow Amtrak to move into Omaha Union Station. Since Sept. 1973 Amtrak has used trailers for station quarters there. Amtrak will take a 20-year lease on the station, and will extend the station track for 565 feet to connect up with the UP mainline. It will build a connection between the UP and the BN, over CNW right of way, to allow use of the station without a backup move. The Omaha station serviced 19,000 passengers in 1976, Amtrak said. The Board also approved spending money to install an elevator for handicapped persons at New York's Penn Station--1800 handicapped people are currently using it yearly. Another station project approved is a new station for Schenectady NY, with Amtrak paying 2/3 of the cost and the state 1/3, and the city donating the land. The state will rehabilitate the downtown tracks at a cost of $3.8 million. The project is expected to be finished by fall 1978, and will cut 15 minutes from train running time. The Board also approved spending $200,000 for renovating the station in Charleston WV..... AMTRAK'S TREASURER TOLD the Board Aug 31 that the corporation's shortfall is more than the $45.6 million that the White House and Congress cut--due to inflation and whatnot the shortfall is actually $50 million. Amtrak said that with all the service cuts announced so far (but excluding the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA change) the corporation would save $28 million, and still needs to cut $22 million more away..... THE MERCED STATION in California will close for the winter after Sep 15, tho the SAN JOAQUIN will continue to stop there. Presumably this closing is not affected by the state's subsidy of the SAN JOAQUIN. Five other San Joaquin Valley stations were going to be closed two days a week if Amtrak's cutback plan had been adopted.....

SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR was involved in a spectacular wreck shortly after leaving Chicago on Aug 27. At La Grange IL a BN freight train derailed just seconds before Amtrak #5 was to meet it, and the two collided. A BN bridge collapsed over the Indiana Harbor Belt RR line, with the freight and the front of the SFZ on it. The two SDP40F engines, 2 baggage and a dormitory car plunged off the tracks on the collapsing bridge, but the remainingcars of the 13-car train, carrying 192 passengers, remained upright. There were about 32 people reported injured, with the most serious being an engineer on the SFZ, who was later reported in satisfactory condition. Passengers were bused to Downers Grove IL, where the eastbound ZEPHYR was held. Photos of thewreck showed one SDP40F engine upside down on the collapsed bridge, and engine 587 upright behind or in front of it. The BN line was tied up for several days, seriously affecting BN commuter operations..... SOUTHBOUND PANAMA LIMITED, train 59, collided with a lumber truck out of a saw mill on Aug 25 just south of Roseland LA at 12:23pm. The Amtrak train was reported moving at 79mph when the engineer saw the truck pull onto the tracks and applied the brakes, slowing the train to about 70mph as the engine struck the rear of the truck's 40-ft trailer. The lead engine, a P30CH-type (as in our cover illustration), was the only train equipment to appear damaged. There were no injuries reported on the train, and while the truck driver appeared uninjured at the scene, he was later admitted to a hospital. Lumber was scattered for 300 feet along the right of way. The lead engine, with body damage on the engineer's side, was removed to McComb for repairs and the train proceeded with the second engine. Broken lumber was lodged in the engine room of the lead diesel, and there was damage to the nose and mid-engine room wall on the right side. Consist of the train was engines 708 & 720; cars 1370 baggage, Amfleet 21822, 21854, 20206, 20036, 21119, 21178, and 21201..... THAT TRAIN PHOTO of the pre-Amfleet INTER-AMERICAN (see photo at left) on the cover of the 1977-8 official Texas highway map was mentioned here earlier this year. The same photo appeared on the rear cover of Texas Highways magazine, February issue, which contains a great deal of rail material, thanks to railfan Jim Steely. Single copies of the magazine are 50¢ from Texas Highways Magazine, 11th & Brazos, Austin TX 78701.....



THE INTER-AMERICAN has reached a close to perfect on-time record since the train was Amfleeted, and after all the talk in the press about Amtrak taking the MoPac to court for poor performance. The change of equipment was evidently a good excuse for the railroad to alter its tactics..... AMTRAK REPORTEDLY REACHED an incentive agreement with the SP on July 1 calling for faster Amtrak schedules on most SP routes provided that the SDP40F locomotives are replaced.....

WE'VE JUST RECEIVED preliminary, tentative Chicago-Seattle schedules for Oct 30. Both trains will operate on the same schedule overnight in both directions between Minneapolis & Chicago, and will both cross Washington State in daylight. EMPIRE BUILDER westbound would lv Chicago 4 days/week 10:05pm, lv Minneapolis 8am, ar Seattle 7:35pm; eastbound lv Seattle 4 days/week at 7:30am, ar Minneapolis at 11:40pm, ar Chicago 9:05am (8:25am if Milwaukee track is improved). NORTH COAST HIAWATHA lv Chicago 3 days/wk 10:05pm, lv Minneapolis 8am, ar Seattle 7:05pm, connect with northbd PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL at Everett WA; lv Seattle 3 days/wk 8am, lv Minneapolis 11:40pm, ar Chicago 9:05am (or 8:25am). Chicago-Minneapolis day service would be handled by an Amfleet run leaving Chicago 11am, ar Minneapolis 8:25pm; lv Minneapolis 7am, ar Chicago 4:25pm.....

THE UNITED AIRCRAFT TurboTrains taken out of service in the N.E. Corridor last year were moved from storage at Providence to Washington DC on Aug 26. The 3 equipment sets were coupled together and towed by GG-1. It reportedly took over 3 hours to move them between New Haven and New York, under 30mph restrictions.....

SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET will auction 5 railway cars for the Wagons-Lits Company at Monte Carlo station Oct 8. They are Pullman parlor car 4163 of 1929, used in the film "Murder on the Orient Express," diner 2741 of 1926 from the Sud Express, and 16-berth luxury sleeping cars 3489, 3543, & 3548 built in 1929 for the Paris-Nice Blue Train. The sale catalog, itself a collectors item, with many color photos, costs $6 from Sotheby Parke Bernet, 980 Madison Ave, New York 10021.....

* * *

THE NEW SACRAMENTAN train Oakland-Sacramento CA is still set to start Oct 30. CalTrans originally wanted to put on 3 trains on that route, but SP threatened to take the matter to the arbitration panel, so CalTrans settled for one train to avoid a long legal hassle. A joint Amtrak-BART ticket arrangement is wanted, but unresolved problems remain in using the BART automatic fare collection system in that way. CalTrans is aiming to extend the train later to Southern California or to Reno. If to Southern California, it would be an overnight train south of Oakland. For one, this would please the city of Oxnard, which wants to finance a train between there and L.A. (in addition to the STARLIGHT). CalTrans also is looking into a possible extension of the SAN JOAQUIN south to San Diego. The SACRAMENTAN, which will share the SAN JOAQUIN's equipment will have an innovation: timecards bearing information about public transportation at each of the train's stops (one may be prepared for the SAN DIEGANS as well).....

A BUS CONNECTION from Sacramento to the SAN JOAQUIN at Stockton, financed by CalTrans, is due to start up Oct 30. The plan to re-route the train to Sacramento has just about been given up, due partly to the cost of track work to connect the lines in Stockton. If the bus proves to be popular, the plan may be reconsidered..... LOS ANGELES UNION Passenger Terminal was the subject of a meeting in August, at which SP (and presumably the other owner railroads) expressed willingness to sell the property to some public entity. LAUPT is important as a public transportation center, and will grow more so--The El Monte busway will come into LAUPT, and L.A.'s planned people mover will reach it. L.A. Airport now has a direct bus into LAUPT running at half-hour intervals.....

* * *

"RUN THE TRAINS where the people are" says NARP director James Ullman in the NY Times (Jul 31), making a pitch for building up the New Haven-Springfield-Boston "Inland Route." The Inland Route is only 3 miles longer than the Shoreline, but serves 4 million more people, he points out..... A WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION of RR Passengers has been formed and is holding an annual meeting Oct 1. WARP's address is Box 715, Green Bay WI 54305..... A RAILROAD MYSTERY occurred recently on the SUNSET LIMITED: a woman was reported missing from the train last January, last seen heading for a restroom as the train was near Benson AZ. An hour's search turned up no trace of her, and on Jul 24 hunters found the remains of her body near Vail AZ..... THE COAST STARLIGHT on Aug 29 was blocked by a freight derailment in Oregon, and made a long backup move to Portland to take BN's Deschutes River detour to continue south. On the 30th it was 12 hrs late heading for Oakland, and a makeup train was formed to run Oakland-L.A. (see Cars & Consists, p.18) by taking the SAN JOAQUIN's equipment and substituting buses for the Valley train. Three SP business cars were included, taking the SP's D.J. Russell on a vacation trip (would Amtrak have done it for only paying passengers?). The next day, Aug 31, the Amfleet equipment returned from L.A. as the STARLIGHT (train 11 had been terminated at Oakland and turned there). When the Amfleet train reached Oakland, a first-time event occurred: loading was performed on two tracks, passengers moving from the Amfleet train on track 1 to the turned conventional equipment on track 2. The northbound SAN JOAQUIN of Aug 31 was again buses.....

DOMES IN STORAGE: car 9400 "Silver Castle" (2nd dome ever built) is stored at Minneapolis; 9370 (ex-SP) and 9464 are at Topeka; 9330 "Silver Chateau" is at Beech Grove..... THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE of State Railway Officials annual meeting was held in mid-August at Colorado Springs. The main item of discussion was the "4-R Act" but the informal discussion reportedly included many complaints about Amtrak, such as why Marketing and Operations can't seem to tie things together..... MICHIGAN INTERSTATE RAILWAY Co., newly formed state operation, will take over the former Ann Arbor RR Oct 1 under a contract approved by the State Highway Commission, and will replace ConRail in operating 328 miles of line between Toledo OH and Frankfort MI. It will also run the ferry service across Lake Michigan between Frankfort and Kewaunee WI..... PRELIMINARY RIDERSHIP FIGURES for July show that Amtrak patronage was up 1.8% over July 1976.....

AMTRAK WANTS TO close the Lewistown PA station, the last small town Pennsylvania station still staffed. The ICC must approve..... SERVICE TO ALBANY, Oregon begin Oct 30 with the COAST STARLIGHT making it a regular stop. The station will be unstaffed..... THREE AMFLEET CARS damaged in the May PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL wreck were moved on flatcars, minus their trucks, from Seattle east towards Spokane Aug 11--cars 21172, 20043, and 21167..... THE WESTBOUND PIONEER was delayed 3 hours Aug 25 at La Grande OR by a UP freight train derailment.....

AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION in the year ended Apr 30 had the first money-losing year in its history, losing $367,000, mostly as a result of the derailment in May..... THE ARROWHEAD'S RIDERSHIP has more than quadrupled since its extension into Duluth and its schedule change. June ridership was 11,573.....

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY was created this summer, and James Schlesinger confirmed by the Senate to head it. The department combines the Federal Energy Administration, the Energy Research and Development Administration, and the Federal Power Commission. It will have 20,000 employees and a $10 billion budget.....

AMTRAK'S "NIGHT OWL" fares have been extended thru Nov 15; they were to expire Aug 15..... THE MARDI GRAS Fun Trains will run again in 1978, with a Jan 31 departure from L.A. on the SUNSET and a Feb 3 departure from Chicago on the PANAMA LIMITED..... BILEVEL LOUNGE CARS will likely be named after national parks, according to one report..... THE ROCK ISLAND was told by the ICC Aug 24 it must continue running the PEORIA ROCKET and QUAD CITY ROCKET for one year after the completion of track repairs in September.....

Mailing date of this issue: September 6, 1977.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Cutting service and raising fares is the classic pattern by which ridership on any transit system is inevitably reduced. Those were the steps the private railroad companies took when they were trying to kill off passenger service, an effort in which they mostly succeeded; so it's ironic in the extreme to see Amtrak, which Congress established to rescue passenger service, embarking on the same course."

--Tom Wicker in New York Times, September 2.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Meanwhile, those 7,500 (SP) rail riders continue each day to roll quietly along past real estate offices, lean-tos, and insurance agencies in cars never too crowded to be uncomfortable. It's the cavier of commutes."

--San Francisco Progress, July 31.

(Yeah, those old commute cars feel like caves.)

I will be in Denver area on 10-1-77. I'd like to share ride with a local railfan who plans on pacing UP 8444 that day Denver-Laramie. Will share gas & other expenses. Dave Arthur 4581 Vallecito Ln, Yorba Linda CA 92686. (714) 528-6457.

CARS & CONSISTS

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, makeup stub train Oakland-L.A., San Jose Aug 30: engines SP 8906, Atk 227 (F40); cars 21832, 20216 Amdinette, 21831, 21828, 21829, SP 100 "Airslie", SP 141 "Oakland", SP 140 "Stanford." Regular train 12hrs late due to freight derailment in Oregon.

*PIONEER, train 26, Seattle Aug 28: engines 218, 219; cars 21169, 20223, 21868, 21174, 21108, 21861, 21859, 20220, 21110, 21862, 21863, 21866. 2nd loco & 1st 4 cars to Salt Lake; rest to Portland for "Sounders" athletic game in Portland.

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 40, detoured Pittsburgh-Washington via B&O thru Cumberland due to Johnstown flood, Jul 21: engines 437, 428, 401, 400; cars 1172, 1054, 1196, 1114, 1044 (baggage cars on at Pittsburgh from prior E.B. trains terminated there); 6017, 6073, 5460, 2000, 2025 "Loch Leven", 5463, 5649, 5421, 5678, 3404, 8804, 8805, 3204 "Swift Stream", 2400 "Snohomish River", 2718 "Pine Dawn", 2561 "Lincoln Park."

*SILVER STAR, train 82, Auburndale Aug 20: (St. Pete section:) engine 641; cars 5475, 5411, 3200 "Forest Stream", 8023, 4420, 4577, 4588, 2707 "Bradenton." (Miami section:) engines 638, 645; cars 1096, 1415, 2794 "Pinellas County", 3228 "William A. Griffin, Jr.", 8001, 5477, 4566, 4572, 4429, 4424, 8061, 3407, 5464, 5451, 4446, 4553, 4433. (9-car convention section on Miami section.)

*NIGHT OWL, train 67, Washington Aug 26: engine: E60 loco no.?; cars 2923 "Pacific Park" with electric power, 20210, 21186, 21181, 21885, 1041 mail & bag, no elec. power, 20074, 20038, 21268, 21251, 21029, 20020, 21819, 21131, 21002, 1292 elec. power car.

*FLORIDIAN/AUTO-TRAIN, train 56, Dupont GA Aug 13: engines A-T 4007, A-T 4012; cars (A-T) 55, 42, 26, 68, 46, 1138, 595, 598, 901, 700, 606; (Amtrak) 1520, 2530 "Bobolink", 8085, 4439, 5474, 4424, 3816, SP 6721.

*list of SDP40F engines rebuilt into F40PHR types, delivered Jul & Aug (old # followed by new #): 540-234; 544-232; 551-236; 552-231; 553-230; 554-239; 556-240; 557-235; 558-233; 559-238; 578-237; 581-241. Partial list of SDP's sent in Aug for rebuilding: 590, 591, 592, 593, 594.

*Amtrak baggage cars 1047, 1036, 1022, 1024, 1064, 1150, 1162, 1166 have been modified by Rail Systems to operate with bi-level cars, are renumbered 1245-1252.

*Ex-UP sleepers 2617, 2623, 2600, 2620 have been rebuilt with electric heating and renumbered with "9" instead of "6" in series. (See NIGHT OWL, above.)

RAIL FANTRIPS

Sep 24: San Luis Central RR tour, RT Monte Vista-Center CO, lv 10am. $7.50 age over 15 only. NRHS, Box 5181 Terminal Annex, Denver CO 80217. Phone 623-6747.

Oct 1: Autumn RT Montreal-Woodsville NH, stop at St. Johnsbury VT. $29.80, kid $14.90. Make M.O. to CP Rail, send to St. Lawrence Valley Rwy Society, Box 400, Cote des Neiges, Montreal Canada H3S 2S7.

Chessie Steam Special 1-day tours, Sep weekends, in VA and MD. For info: Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS, Box 8583, Richmond VA 23226.

One special Fantrips listing is free, subject to our editing. Send full info to: Rail Travel News, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

WEST COAST RAIL SALE, now through April 30th, except during Holiday periods. $129.00 round trip coach between San Diego/Los Angeles and Portland/Seattle/Vancouver. $89.00 between San Francisco and Seattle, $77.00 between San Francisco and Portland. Other money-saving 30-day excursion fares to the East, as well as the winter USA Rail passes. Ask the rail specialists, LET'S TRAVEL TOURS, 3780 Elizabeth St, Riverside CA 92516. 714-787-8350.

EARN MORE INTEREST than you're getting now. Publishers of RTN seek money for business expansion and improvement. If you have $500 or more to invest, write in confidence to: "Finance Dept", Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Express Ads

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, Pullman, stationery, rules, metal items from 25 railroads. Long stamped envelope for list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. (Will buy large and small railroad collections.)

ONE QUICK CALL DOES IT ALL--Amtrak or airline reservations and tickets, hotels, car rentals, tours, cruises! Call GREAT WESTERN TOURS at (415) 398-2994, or write us at 639 Market Street, Ninth Floor, San Francisco 94105.

Employee Timetables, Pullman Diagrams, Railroadiana. Send SSAE. 20th Century Hobbies Ltd., 1034 College Ave., Wheaton IL 60187.

STEAM'S STILL SUPREME in Niagara Falls! Savor 6060, then shop at the IRON HORSE Gifts & Souvenirs in the CN Depot. Mention this ad for a 10% DISCOUNT.

GOING EURAIL? Take a worldwide THOMAS COOK INTERNATIONAL TIMETABLE, $7.50 bulk mail ($9.50 air) from Thomas Cook Ltd, P.O. Box 36, Peterborough, England.

YOU'RE INVITED--MEXICO RAILFAN FUN-TRAIN--JAN 20 to Feb 5, 1978--Trip of Thousand Wonders, Mexico City, Merida (narrow gauge), Cancun, Uxmal, Metro, street cars, locomotive ride. Trip starts in Oklahoma (join anywhere). MIDWEST TRAVEL SERVICE, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City, OK 73110--Phone 405-732-0566.

History of C&O's GEORGE WASHINGTON...Complete story of this train told and illustrated in May 1977 C&O Historical Newsletter (34pp total) $2.00 per copy. Consider joining C&O Historical Society; much treatment & illustration of C&O passenger operations & AMTRAK. $7.50/year. C&O Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 417, Alderson WV 24910.

Don't be in the dark, subscribe to the LARK. A monthly newsletter about what to do and where to find it, a must for all railfans. Be in the know. Get free copy by mentioning RTN & enclosing stamp. Mail subscriptions to Ron Hook, 869 Rosemount Rd, Oakland CA 94610. Subscriptions $3.00 for 12 issues first class.

CZ THE STORY OF THE CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR
by Karl R. Zimmermann

$10.95
Postpaid
from:

DELFORD PRESS
Post Office Box 27
Oradell, N.J. 07649

Vista-Domes, Zephyrettes, Rio Grande PA's, Feather River Canyon, the Colorado Rockies, the Cable Car Room, delectable dinners in the diner: all are captured in words and pictures in this definitive history.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES:

Express Ads $1.00 per line of 80 spaces. Display Ads (camera-ready) $25 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 inches); smaller sizes are priced proportionately. Address: MESSAGE MEDIA, Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709.

BACK ISSUES

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS
P. O. BOX 9007
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94709

Send me the following:
__complete 1976 @ $7
__complete 1975 @ $7

Name.....
Address .....
.....